



Happy Hanukkah!

Inside Story



Vigil for Ric Gordon, p.12

VOL. 87, No. 3

15 Crescent Rd., Suite 100, Greenbelt, MD 20770-1887

DECEMBER 7, 2023

## Program Trains Retirees to Be Volunteers in State Legislature

by Butch Hicks

Greenbelt retired residents seeking purposeful volunteering opportunities have a well-established program available. The Legacy Leadership Institute for Public Policy (LLIPP), a 20-year-old program developed by the University of Maryland School of Public Health, offers a training resource for retirees age 50 and older that focuses on pairing program participants with members of the Maryland legislature or with nonprofit agencies. Greenbelt residents Emmett Jordan, Molly Lester, Donna Hoffmeister, Michael Hartman and Carol and Murray Malveaux are among those who have completed the program. They shared their thoughts about the LLIPP program and how it has assisted them in supporting Maryland legislators and participating in community and other volunteering.

A University of Maryland Center on Aging survey revealed “baby boomers wanted volunteer opportunities with personal growth, lifelong learning, and

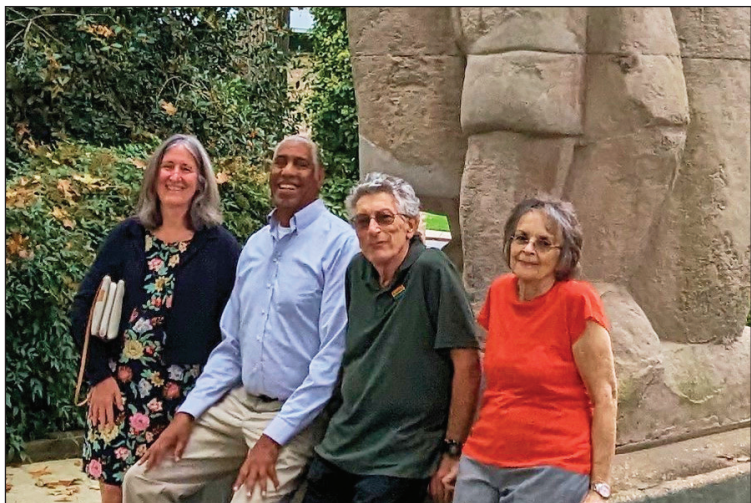


PHOTO BY BUTCH HICKS

Greenbelt residents among LLIPP program participants, from left, Molly Lester, Greenbelt Mayor Emmett Jordan, Michael Hartman and Donna Hoffmeister

meaningful work.” The LLIPP fits the bill. After completing the LLIPP classes, participants become known as Legacy Leaders who assist legislators and officials with everything from research and office organization to grant applications and constituent relations.

### Emmett Jordan

At the end of their volunteer service, some participants are hired by the legislators they volunteered for or, as Jordan

See **LEADERSHIP**, page 6

## Greenbelt’s Pam Hamlin Is An Early Learning Champion

by Cavit Ireland

After long hours in the office organizing educational programs and activities from behind the scenes, stepping into a library reminds Greenbelter Pamela Hamlin why she does what she does.

“This is what it’s all about, seeing kids develop a love for books, seeing them interact with their friends and parents,” said Hamlin. The family literacy specialist for Prince George’s County Memorial Library System (PGC-MLS) coordinates learning programs and activities for libraries across the county.

In October, Hamlin was named a PBS Kids Early Learning Champion, one of 14 in the nation honored this year. Started in 2018, the award honors “committed and talented early education professionals who work with young children and their families,” as PBS describes the award on their website. This year’s honorees include teachers, librarians and daycare providers from 15 different states.



PHOTO COURTESY PAM HAMLIN

Pam Hamlin

Hamlin had worked with Stephanie Terezon, WETA education manager, and Ferne Barrow, director of engagement at the station, on a number of different early childhood groups in the county.

See **HAMLIN**, page 6

## GSA to Evaluate FBI HQ Greenbelt Selection Process

by Erica Johns

The General Services Administration (GSA) plans to evaluate the process by which GSA selected Greenbelt for the new national headquarters of the FBI. GSA’s Acting Inspector General Robert Erickson will conduct the evaluation.

Following GSA’s November 8, 2023, announcement of Greenbelt’s selection (see the November 16, 2023, News Review) over Landover, Md., and Springfield, Va., FBI Director Christopher Wray and Virginia elected officials challenged the selection. Virginia’s U.S. Senators Mark Warner and Tim Kaine and U.S. Representative Gerry Connolly wrote to Erickson on November 15 requesting “an immediate investigation into the serious concerns raised by ... Director Wray.” They cited “overwhelming evidence suggesting that the General Services Administration (GSA) administered a site selection process fouled by political considerations and alleged impropriety – one that was repeatedly curated to arrive at a predetermined outcome.”

Erickson responded November 30 that his office will immediately begin an evaluation of GSA’s selection of the site. “Our objective,” he said, “will be to assess the agency’s process and procedures for the site selection to relocate the FBI Headquarters.” His

response did not say how long the evaluation may take, but did say the resulting report would be shared with the Virginia Senators and Congress. It is possible GSA will also share the report with the general public because since the November challenges GSA has made a point of publishing site selection documents and correspondence on their website, including a General Counsel review that found the site selection to be legally sound.

Inspectors General (IGs) promote economy, efficiency and effectiveness, and address waste, fraud and abuse in their agencies, and their activities are governed by federal IG standards. So it is worth noting that although the Virginia congressional delegation requested an “investigation,” Erickson plans an “evaluation.” IG investigations address possible violations of law, regulation or policy, while evaluations examine an organization’s performance or processes or financial management. The media sometimes describes IG activity as an investigation, and politicians may demand an “investigation” for political effect.

A joint statement regarding the evaluation was released by Maryland officials including Gov. Wes Moore, Lt. Gov. Aruna Miller, U.S. Senators Ben Cardin and

See **FBI**, page 6

## Board of Elections Shares Ways To Fill Vacant City Council Seat

by Bonnie Schrack

Greenbelt’s tragic loss of Councilmember Ric Gordon has not only deeply touched the community, it has created a challenging problem for the Greenbelt City Council, which is left with only six members.

Council has called on Greenbelt’s Board of Elections (BOE) to advise them on the question. The board met on November 30 to explore the possible courses of action and reconvened on Monday, December 4 to finalize their memo outlining the options available.

### Franklin Park

A section called Interests of Franklin Park opens the memo. In it the BOE asks council to be sure to consider the interests of the voters of Franklin Park. “They, it is clear, have lost their spokesperson,” states the memo.

### What Goes On

**Monday, December 11**  
7:30 p.m., City Council Meeting, Municipal Building  
**Wednesday, December 13**  
7:30 p.m., City Council Work-session: Parke Crescent Apartments, Municipal Building

See the city ad on page 5 or the meetings calendar at [greenbeltmd.gov](http://greenbeltmd.gov) for more information.

It suggests a special public meeting be held in that community to hear their concerns.

### The City’s Charter

At Thursday’s meeting, BOE members noted that the City Charter hardly anticipated a situation such as that now faced: a vacant seat with nearly an entire two-year term remaining. It simply states that in the event of a vacancy, council must, as soon as possible, elect by their majority vote a person to fill the remaining term. The Charter does not define “as soon as possible,” specify how council should go

about choosing the person to be elected or set any requirements for consulting the public.

### Majority Vote by Council

The first of three options presented by the BOE is for council to follow the same practice used when a councilmember recently stepped down. They could choose any citizen of Greenbelt who is a registered voter to serve the term. If they wish, they could choose to elect any one of the four candidates from the November election who ran but were not elected

See **ELECTIONS**, page 7



PHOTO BY DANIELLE TOWERS

Santa makes an appearance in Roosevelt Center on December 1. See more photos on page 12.

Editorial

Carriers Bear Greetings

With a December issue of the newspaper, the Greenbelt News Review distributes an envelope that requests tips for carriers. Envelopes are addressed to the carrier who delivers your newspaper. The return address is the News Review at Suite 100, 15 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, MD, 20770.

Envelopes can be delivered to the carriers three ways:

1. You can hand-carry them to the carrier’s home.
2. You can put a stamp on them and send them through the mail.
3. You can drop the envelope at the News Review’s office at the address above.

We advise against putting cash in the envelopes given recent mail thefts. Write checks to the carrier name shown on the envelope. Apparently gel pens are less easy to wash and forge.

Though carriers receive nominal pay each week, this extra token means a lot. Pay teaches them about money and the work ethic, and tips show the additional rewards that come from taking pride in being prompt, organized and careful. Families with multiple routes find the income helpful. This is a first job for many carriers, for whom this positive first work experience influences them toward becoming productive adults.

All those distributing the paper have faithfully helped us get the paper out every week. Our circulation manager, Elizabeth Gardner, helps keep the whole process on track. Alan Burt is a key link who delivers newspapers to carriers and fills boxes and racks.

The holiday season allows all of us to appreciate and encourage our carriers and show understanding for any minor delivery problems that may have happened during the year. The News Review thanks everybody involved for doing a great job, caring about the community and braving heat, cold and wet conditions to bring residents their papers.



Letters to the Editor

Kudos on FBI Coverage

Kudos to reporter Erica Johns and the editorial staff at the Greenbelt News Review for her two stories in the November 16 edition about Greenbelt being selected for the new FBI Headquarters. The stories, in my opinion, were well researched, well written and more informative than articles I had read in other publications. I live in Montgomery Village, but a friend in Greenbelt mailed me that issue because the articles are so good. Again, kudos to Erica and the editors.

Phil Jones

trails safer from reduced erosion and to improve safety, but alas I have been unable to find any snipes.

Perhaps if a large enough number of folks come out to help on our work day on Saturday, December 16 then they will see that the people of Greenbelt love the Preserve and are trying to help, not hurt their habitat. If you want to volunteer to work for this effort, or learn more about BSA Troop 214 or Venture Crew 746, contact Kellen Murray at murraykman@gmail.com.

Kellen Murray

Snipes in the Preserve?

If only the snipes in the Forest Preserve could read, then they would know from last week’s Greenbelt News Review that the landscaping flags that they removed were for my BSA Eagle Scout Project.

I wish I could tell them that my project is part of a larger effort to caretake the Preserve and improve their habitat by making

Thanks for Leaving The Leaves Under Trees

I appreciated the excellent article by Xochitl Zamora-Thompson in the November 23 issue about the importance of leaving fallen leaves to support important wildlife and improve soil health.

I was excited to see that the landscaping crews left a nice

See **LETTERS**, page 8

On Screen at Greenbelt Cinema

The Boy and the Heron

In this Japanese animated fantasy film by Hayao Miyazaki, based on a novel by Genzaburō Yoshino, a young boy named Mahito yearning for his mother ventures into a world shared by the living and the dead. There, death comes to an end and life finds a new beginning. The film is a semi-autobiographical fantasy about life, death and creation, in tribute to friendship.

The Hunger Games: The Ballad Of Songbirds & Snakes

This story takes place 64 years before Katniss Everdeen volunteered as tribute and decades before Coriolanus Snow became the tyrannical President of Panem. The film follows a young Coriolanus (Tom Blyth) who is the last hope for his failing lineage, the once-proud Snow family that has fallen from grace in a post-war Capitol. With his livelihood threatened, Snow is reluctantly assigned to mentor Lucy Gray Baird (Rachel Zegler), a tribute from the impoverished District 12. But after Lucy Gray’s charm captivates the audience of Panem, Snow sees an opportunity to shift their fates. With everything he has worked for hanging in the balance, Snow unites with Lucy Gray to turn the odds in their favor. Battling his instincts for both good and evil, Snow sets out on a race against time to survive and reveal if he will ultimately become a songbird or a snake.

Elf

Buddy (Will Ferrell) was accidentally transported to the North Pole as a toddler and raised to adulthood among Santa’s elves. Unable to shake the feeling that he doesn’t fit in, the adult Buddy travels to New York, in full elf uniform, in search of his real father. As it happens, this is Walter Hobbs (James Caan), a cynical businessman. After a DNA test proves this, Walter reluctantly attempts to start a relationship with the childlike Buddy with increasingly chaotic results.



Greenbelt Cinema  
129 Centerway  
301-329-2034  
www.greenbeltcinema.org  
Members Always \$6.50!  
Member kids are always FREE!  
Adults \$9, Kids \$6,  
Senior/Student/Military \$8  
All shows before 5 PM:  
Adults \$7, Kids \$5  
OC = Open Captions  
CC = Closed Captions  
DVS = Descriptive Video Service

**SHOWTIMES:**  
**DECEMBER 8th - 14th**  
  
**The Boy and the Heron**  
(PG-13) (CC) (DVS)  
(2023) (124 mins)  
**Screen 1 - Main Auditorium**  
Fri. 5:00 PM (subbed),  
8:00 PM (dubbed)  
Sat. 5:00 PM (subbed),  
8:00 PM (dubbed)  
Sun. 2:00 PM (dubbed/OC),  
5:00 PM (subbed)  
Mon. 2:00 PM (subbed),  
5:00 PM (dubbed)  
Tues. 7:15 PM (dubbed)  
Wed. 7:15 PM (subbed)  
Thurs. 7:15 PM (dubbed)

**The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds & Snakes**  
(PG-13) (CC) (DVS) (2023)  
(158 mins)  
**Screen 2 - The Screening Room**  
Fri. 4:45 PM, 8:15 PM  
Sat. 4:45 PM, 8:15 PM  
Sun. 1:45 PM, 5:15 PM  
Mon. 1:45 PM (OC), 5:15 PM  
Tues. 7:00 PM  
Wed. 7:00 PM  
Thurs. 7:00 PM

**Elf**  
(PG) (CC) (DVS) (2003) (95 mins)  
Sponsored by Choice Clinical Services and Greenbelt Rec.  
This event is FREE with a suggested donation of \$5 per person. Don't forget to bring a NEW pair of gloves or socks – we'll use them for a mid-movie snowball fight, then donate them to Greenbelt CARES!  
**Screen 1 - Main Auditorium**  
Sat. 1:00 PM

Letters Policy

Deadline for letters is 6 p.m. Monday. Submission does not guarantee publication. Letters should be no longer than 300 words (shorter letters are more likely to be published).

Letters may be edited for clarity, grammar, civility and space constraints. The News Review may add a comment from the editor if deemed necessary.

All letters must include the letter writer's name, physical address, and telephone number. Only the name will be published; the News Review will consider requests for the name to be withheld.



Greenbelt News Review

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**PUBLICATION DEADLINES:**  
- Monday 2 p.m. Articles/photos over 700 words, Display ads (not camera ready).  
- Monday 6 p.m. All letters to the editor (300 word limit).  
- Tuesday 2 p.m. Articles/photos under 700 words, photographs not associated with a story.  
- Tuesday 6 p.m. Classified ads and camera-ready display ads.  
- Email submission is available. Hardcopy submissions (delivered by respective deadline) may be mailed to the address above or left in the Co-op grocery store drop box or GNR external office door mail slot, as shown below.  
- Payment must accompany ads except by prior arrangement

MAIL SUBSCRIPTION: \$55/year

Greenbelt Community Center at 15 Crescent Rd.  
OFFICE HOURS: Monday 2 - 4 p.m., Tuesday 2 - 4, 6 - 8 p.m.  
Office is currently closed to the public. Please phone or email.  
GNR external office door mail slot is located up a few stairs 25 yards left of the Community Center's east door near the municipal building.

# Community Events

## 'Tis the Season of Giving: Feeding Those in Need

Greenbelt PORCH is continuing its program to collect food in December as scheduled below:

Sunday, December 10 – by 11 a.m. at the 1-8 Courts Ridge, 1-8 Courts Crescent and 1-2 Courts Westway; by 4 p.m. for P.A.L. (PORCH at large) members (including former Woodland Hills donors)

Saturday, December 16 – by 10 a.m. for 14 and 15 Courts Laurel Hill

Sunday, December 17 – by 4 p.m. for the 9 and 12 Courts Ridge Road, the 11 and 13 Courts Ridge Road and Boxwood Village; by 5 p.m. for Lakeside Drive.

As the holidays draw near, many families struggle to put a healthy dinner on their tables. To help out, leave a donation of nonperishables and hygiene products by the front door marked RUAK or PORCH visible from the street. Ensure donated items have not expired. If not part of a regular pickup route, contact Robert Goldberg-Strassler by noon on Sunday, December 17 at spreadruak@gmail.com. He will come to your porch and pick up your donation.

Volunteers who would like to expand Greenbelt PORCH to additional neighborhoods in Greenbelt are always welcome; especially needed are coordinators in the Greenbelt East area. Anyone who has questions or who is interested in being a volunteer or starting a new neighborhood for monthly food collection with Greenbelt PORCH, contact Goldberg-Strassler at spreadruak@gmail.com.

## GREa Meets December 12

The Greenbelt Racial Equity Alliance (GREa) holds its December monthly meeting on Tuesday, December 12, 7 to 8:30 p.m. through Zoom. Agenda items include ARPA reallocations from “people first” programs; GREa planning for 2024; Reparations Commission updates; equity data group updates; and Tribes Diversity, Equity and Inclusion audit phase 2.

For a link to the meeting, go to the GREa website: greenbeltraciaequity.org/events.

## Greenbelt Chess Club To Meet in New Spot

The Chess Club will meet on Monday, December 11, 6 to 8:30 p.m. at the Youth Center. Note the change of location. For more details, contact Effie at 443-415-1053.



## At the Library

Regular hours for the Greenbelt Library are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Mondays, Thursdays, Fridays; noon to 8 p.m., Tuesdays and Wednesdays; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturdays; and 1 to 5 p.m., Sundays. Face masks are recommended for all customers over the age of 2 at Prince George’s County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) buildings.

### Storytimes

Friday, December 8, 10:30 a.m., ages birth to 5, at the Springhill Lake Community Center, 6101 Cherrywood Lane. Enjoy the wonderful world of storytelling. Friends and family welcome. Ven y disfruta del maravilloso mundo de contar cuentos. Amigos y familiares son bienvenidos. Hosted by Greenbelt Branch Library staff and Random Unselfish Acts of Kindness (RUAK). Register at pgcmls.info/event/9384133.

Friday, December 8, 11:15 a.m., ages 2 to 3. Register at pgcmls.info/event/9369893.

Monday, December 11, 10:15 a.m., ages newborn to 2. Register at pgcmls.info/event/9369872.

Wednesday, December 13, 12:15 p.m., ages 3 to 5. Register at pgcmls.info/event/9369887.

### Bibliobop Dance Party

Saturday, December 9, 10:30 a.m., ages birth to 5. Bust a move and shake the sillies out. Bring parents or caregivers and prepare to boogie and bop. Register at pgcmls.info/event/9402901.

### Banned Book Club

Wednesday, December 13, 6:30 p.m., ages 13+. PGCMLS and the Prince George’s County Office of Human Rights host a monthly book club at various branches throughout the year to explore the top ten challenged books of 2022. This month’s discussion at the Greenbelt Library features Crank by Ellen Hopkins, a poet, freelance writer and the award-winning author of 20 nonfiction titles, three novels for adults and 13 N.Y. Times Best-selling novels-in-verse. Customers may submit a request to borrow a copy via the PGCMLS online catalog. Pick it up at the Library or contact Ask a Librarian / Biblio Consulta at 240-455-5451 for assistance. Register at pgcmls.info/event/9241948.



## Santa Claus Is Coming

Here comes Santa Claus, Here comes Santa Claus, right down Crescent Road! Ho, Ho, Ho, guess who is going to visit Greenbelt Volunteer Fire Department? Santa is coming Saturday, December 9 from noon to 2 p.m., at 125 Crescent Road. Bring the children and/or grandchildren down to greet, meet, talk and have pictures taken with Santa. The fire department auxiliary will be serving pizza and hot dogs. Crafts, movies and goodie bags will be available for every child. Donations are always welcome and accepted. Come on down to the firehouse for a wonderful time and wonderful memory for the children.



## Star Party Saturday

The Astronomical Society of Greenbelt will host a star party, free and open to the public, on Saturday, December 9 at the City Observatory located at Northway Fields. Attendees can expect to see Saturn, Jupiter and deep-sky objects such as galaxies, nebulae and star clusters currently high in the sky, viewed through the observatory telescope and astronomical camera. All are welcome and there is no charge. Visitors are encouraged to bring their own telescopes to set up on the hilltop.

Observing will begin at 6 p.m. and continue for two hours. Attendees are asked to park in the ballfield lot, not up on the hill, unless bringing a telescope. The star party will be canceled without notice if it is hopelessly cloudy.



## Free Covid Tests Are Available Again

Once again, four at-home Covid tests per household are available for free from the federal government. Sign up to receive the tests at covid.gov/tests.

## Golden Age Club December Meetings

The Greenbelt Golden Age Club meets weekly on Wednesdays at 11 a.m. in the Community Center. This month features a guest speaker and a holiday potluck. There will be no meeting on December 27.

December 13, Holiday Potluck Luncheon and December birthday celebration. This meeting is for members only.

December 20, Guest speaker Nichole Ruffin, Caressence Therapeutics, on the benefits of aromatherapy.

December 27, no meeting. Winter break.

## Community Invited To Mishkan Torah

On Sunday, December 10 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., join Mishkan Torah for a family-friendly Hanukkah celebration, with latkes, a play by the Karp Family School students and a sing-along session. Community members are welcome; email ChildrensEd@mishkantorah.org to RSVP.

On Sunday, December 17 from 10 a.m. to noon, join Mishkan Torah for their Sundays @ MT monthly programming, with a bagel brunch, current events discussion, a children’s play group and a book club discussion of Geraldine Brooks’ People of the Book. Visit at MishkanTorah.org to RSVP.

## Winter Wonderland, Saturday, December 9

Venture Crew 746 will host a magical walk through the forest in Greenbelt on Saturday, December 9 from 5 to 8 p.m. The woods behind Mowatt Memorial United Methodist Church will be transformed with twinkling lights, decorations and holiday performances. The church is located at 40 Ridge Road. This is the third year that Venture Crew has invited the community to this fundraising event supporting the organization’s activities.



## Pre-K Tri-lingual Story Time Friday

On Friday, December 8 at 10:30 a.m. at the Springhill Lake Recreation Center, RUAK (Random Unselfish Acts of Kindness) with the Prince George’s County Memorial Library System will present engaging lively stories and activities for young children and their caregivers to help build early literacy skills. There will be a sign interpreter for the deaf present. This monthly Tri-lingual program is an introduction to reading aloud to children as a way to instill a love of literature. After the readings, the children can stay and play with balls in the gym. There will be free children’s books and free healthy nutritious snacks.

Spread the word to friends and families.

### Libros, bolas, burbujas

Damos la bienvenida a la comunidad sorda!

El viernes 8 de diciembre a las 10:30 a.m. en el Centro Recreativo del Lago Springhill, RUAK (Random Acts of Kindness) con el sistema de bibliotecas conmemorativas del condado de Prince George’s presentarán interesantes historias y actividades animadas para niños pequeños y sus cuidadores para ayudar a desarrollar la educación temprana y habilidades de alfabetización. Este programa Tri-lingue mensual es una introducción a la lectura en voz alta para los niños como una forma de inculcar el amor por la literatura. Después de las lecturas, los niños pueden quedarse a jugar con pelotas en el gimnasio. Libros infantiles gratis. Aperitivos saludables y nutritivos gratis. Como dijo un padre al irse, “Fue muy bueno ... unete a nosotros.

Corra la voz a amigos y familiares.

# This Week at the New Deal Café

SUPPORT Greenbelt's only venue with BOTH dinner AND a show!

113 Centerway, Roosevelt Center, Greenbelt, MD

Hours: Mon/Wed/Th 8am-9pm; Tues 8am-9:30pm; Friday/Saturday 8am – midnight; Sunday 9am – 9pm, UNLESS NOTED.

TH 12/07	FRI 12/08	SAT 12/09	SUN 12/10	
<b>Wolf's Blues Show &amp; Sit-In Jam</b> 6:30-10pm A big boogie blues jam!	<b>PIANO STYLINGS OF PETER REPPERT, 6-7:30</b> <b>The Wharf Rats</b> AND 11th ANNUAL UGLY SWEATER PARTY!! 8-11pm	<b>KRAMPUSNACHT!</b> GREENBELT HONK! SITUATION <b>6-8pm</b> <b>Kindred Crow!</b> 8-11pm <i>Mayhem Abounds!</i>	<b>DEAF BRUNCH, 10:30-12pm</b> <b>Eleanor's New Deal Cabaret</b> 6-8pm Drag performer D'Manda Martini hosts an amazing ensemble!	
MON 12/11	TUES 12/12	WED 12/13	TH 12/14	SPECIALS!
<b>Members Appreciation Night</b> 4-9pm Discounts for New Deal members!	<b>Open Mic with Tom Gleason</b> 7-9:30pm Play music. Read poetry. Or perform what you like!	<b>Wendy &amp; the Lost Boys</b> 7-9pm New Orleans tinged danceable groove!	<b>Patsy's Honky Tonk Christmas Show</b> 7-9pm Classic country and rockabilly, holiday style!	<b>HAPPY HOUR</b> 4-7pm \$1 OFF BEER AND WINE <b>WEDNESDAY</b> \$1 OFF PER GLASS <b>\$5 OFF A BOTTLE</b>

Join or renew your membership. Go to [www.newdealcafe.com](http://www.newdealcafe.com), click on "ABOUT", then "BECOME A MEMBER OR RENEW."

\* For more information on these and other events, visit the **NDC CALENDAR** page on our website.

FUNDING FOR THESE ADS PROVIDED BY A GENEROUS DONOR.

## Greenbelt Access Television

**Dec. 9, Sat - Dec. 15, Fri**  
Verizon FIOS Channel 19 • Comcast 77  
(School Programming on Your Cable Guide)  
Streaming on [www.greenbeltaccessstv.org](http://www.greenbeltaccessstv.org)

THIS WEEK on GATe • Your Community Access Station

Featured Film (9am, 3pm, and 8pm)

**Utopia Film Festival 2023 Selections**

Come along for this cinematic adventure, as we revisit some of our favorite films from this year's festival.

New This Month

**What's New at Greenbelt Cinema - December 2023**

It's the holiday season, and Greenbelt Cinema has all the season's beloved classics and anticipated new releases. Tune in to see what updates Caitlin McGrath has in store!

All this and more on the GATe channel this week! Check [greenbeltaccessstv.org](http://greenbeltaccessstv.org) for the full broadcast schedule, and visit [Greenbelt Access Television](#) on YouTube for new video productions.

# Obituaries

## Brandon Ricardo Gordon



PHOTO COURTESY CITY OF GREENBELT

### Brandon "Ric" Gordon

Ric Gordon died suddenly at the age of 41 on Sunday morning, November 26, 2023, in Greenbelt, leaving his family in deep sorrow. Our beloved Ric, now with the Lord, left an indelible mark on the hearts of those who knew and cherished him.

Ric was born on September 19, 1982, in Prince George's County. He was preceded in death by his maternal and paternal grandparents. Ric is survived by his wife, Carla Gordon; his father, Jeffery Gordon; his mother, Deidre Waweru; bonus parents and in-laws; adult children; grandchildren; brothers and sisters; nieces and nephews; aunts and uncles, cousins, godchildren and friends; and a grieving community. His memory will forever be etched in the lives he touched.

A Celebration of Life service will be held at a later date to honor the remarkable legacy of Councilman Ric! Gordon.

—The Gordon family

## Harriet Ginsburg

Harriet Gherts Ginsburg died on November 24, 2023. She was a devoted daughter, sister, wife, a loving mother, a cherished grandmother (Bubbie) and a proud great-grandmother. Harriet was an extraordinary woman whose unconditional love for her family was the cornerstone of her life.

Born in Washington, D.C., on July 16, 1941, Harriet was a beacon of strength and compassion. For an incredible 62 years, she was married to her husband, David Ginsburg, creating a bond that withstood the test of time. Their love was a shining example for all, and their union was a testament to the power of commitment and devotion.

While Harriet called Greenbelt home for 58 years, she also loved to travel with her family. Her travel included unique destinations such as Israel, Egypt, Italy, Norway, Ja-



PHOTO COURTESY THE FAMILY

### Harriet Gherts Ginsburg

pan, Costa Rica and Hawaii.

As a mother, Harriet was the epitome of selflessness. Material items were not important to her. She dedicated herself wholeheartedly to raising her sons, Richard and Michael, showering them with love, guidance and unwavering support. She was their rock, their confidante and their biggest cheerleader. Harriet nurtured her children with endless love and care, always ensuring they had a safe and welcoming home.

The joy of Harriet's life extended to her grandchildren, Leah, Amber and Sierra. As Bubbie, she embraced her role as a grandmother with open arms, delighting in their every accomplishment and milestone. Her love for them was boundless, and she cherished the special moments shared with her grandchildren, creating memories that will forever be treasured. Most

recently, Harriet was blessed with the arrival of her great-grandson, Mason. Harriet was overjoyed to witness the continuation of her legacy and family through younger generations. One of her favorite Jewish sayings was "L'dor Va-Dor" which translates to "from generation to generation."

Harriet was a woman of faith and held her Jewish heritage close to her heart. She found solace and strength in her traditions, passing down the values of family, unity and kindness to her loved ones. Her home was a sanctuary of love and warmth, where she nurtured and protected her family with unwavering dedication.

See OBITUARIES, page 8



Our condolences to the family and friends of Harriet Ginsburg, who have lost their rock, their confidante and their biggest cheerleader.

Condolences also to the family, friends and current and former piano students of Ellen Yoko Sakai, whose lifelong devotion to music inspired so many.

Send details of your news to [editor@greenbeltnewsreview.com](mailto:editor@greenbeltnewsreview.com).



The Bible Says...

For I (God) satisfy the weary ones and refresh everyone who languishes.  
Jeremiah 31:25



**IN PERSON Sunday Worship Services**  
10a-11:15a @ Greenbelt Elementary School  
(66 Ridge Rd.)  
**MCFcc.org**

**ST. HUGH OF GRENOBLE CATHOLIC CHURCH**

- Daily Mass: Mon-Fri 7:15am\*, Sat 9am\*
- Sunday Mass:
  - Sat vigil 5pm\*
  - Sun 8am, 9:30am, 11am
- Confessions Saturday 3pm - 4pm.

Masks for the unvaccinated encouraged.

**CELEBRATE WITH US**  
135 Crescent Rd.  
**www.sthughofgrenoble.org**

\*Live streamed on Facebook and available on our YouTube page later.



**Paint Branch Unitarian Universalist Church**

3215 Powder Mill Road, Adelphi  
Phone: 301-937-3666 [www.pbuuc.org](http://www.pbuuc.org)



Welcomes you to our open, nurturing community



December 10, 2023 at 3:00 pm  
**Lighting Our Candle**  
Carol Boston, Lula Beatty

Midway through this year's celebration of Hanukkah, join us for personal reflections about the meaning of this holiday for Jewish Unitarian Universalists, and for us all.

Streaming to our Facebook page, on Zoom and in person at 3:00 at:  
University Christian Church, 6800 Adelphi Road, Hyattsville, MD

**YOU ARE INVITED!**



CAROLS & WORSHIP 2023

**WONDERFUL**

SUNDAY DECEMBER 10 2023 | 5:00PM


**119 CENTERWAY GREENBELT MD 20770**

Restoration Church MD

301-345-0007

[info@rccg.org](mailto:info@rccg.org)



**CATHOLIC COMMUNITY of GREENBELT**

**MASS**  
Sundays 10:00 a.m.  
City Council Room  
25 Crescent Road  
**ALL ARE WELCOME!**

OR - Join us on ZOOM!  
For ZOOM link:  
[FDeBernardo@aol.com](mailto:FDeBernardo@aol.com)

**Greenbelt BAPTIST CHURCH**


Christ-centered  
Biblical  
& Reformed

Sunday Morning Worship 10:30am  
Sunday School 9:15am  
Wednesday Night Bible Study 7:00pm

101 Greenhill Rd. Greenbelt, MD  
[www.greenbeltbaptist.org](http://www.greenbeltbaptist.org)



"For the first time in history it is possible for everyone to view the entire planet, with all its myriad diversified peoples, in one perspective. World peace is not only possible but inevitable. It is the next stage in the evolution of this planet."  
— Universal House of Justice



**Greenbelt Bahá'í Community**  
[www.greenbeltbahais.org](http://www.greenbeltbahais.org)

**Mishkan Torah Congregation**

10 Ridge Road, Greenbelt, MD 20770  
Rabbi Saul Oresky, Cantor Phil Greenfield



An unpretentious, historic, welcoming, liberal, egalitarian synagogue that respects tradition and becomes your extended family in the 21st century.

Friday evening services at 8:00pm  
Saturday morning services at 10:00am  
Offering hybrid services, online and in-person activities  
For further information, call (301) 474-4223 [www.mishkantorah.org](http://www.mishkantorah.org)  
Affiliated with these movements: Conservative and Reconstructing Judaism

**Mowatt Memorial United Methodist Church**  
40 Ridge Road, Greenbelt



Open hearts, Open minds, Open doors  
Find us on  [facebook.com/mowattumc](https://www.facebook.com/mowattumc)  
301-474-9410  
**Pastor Evelyn Romero**  
In-Person Worship Service 9:30 a.m.



**Service for the Weary**  
**Tuesday, December 19 @ 7:00-8:00 pm**  
Open to all in our community who struggle to find joy in the season.  
**Bring your grief. Bring your weariness. Bring your fatigue and allow yourself a quiet space for reflection and healing.**



**UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**Greenbelt Community Church**  
One Hillside Road  
[www.facebook.com/GCCUCCMD](https://www.facebook.com/GCCUCCMD)  
[www.greenbeltcommunitychurch.org](http://www.greenbeltcommunitychurch.org)



**HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED WONDERFUL COUNSELLOR MIGHTY GOD EVERLASTING FATHER PRINCE OF PEACE**

**Please Join Us this December**  
We are an Open and Affirming Church  
Advent Services Sundays at 10:15 a.m.  
The Nativity through African American Spirituals  
Christmas Festival Sunday, Dec. 10, 3-5:00 p.m.  
Christmas Concert Sunday, Dec. 16, 7:00 p.m.  
Christmas Eve Service Sunday, Dec. 24, 7:00 p.m.



# City Information & Events

The strength of Greenbelt is diverse people living together in a spirit of cooperation. We celebrate all people. By sharing together all are enriched. We strive to be a respectful, welcoming community that is open, accessible, safe and fair.

## GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL - REGULAR MEETING

Monday, December 11, 2023 at 7:30 pm

### ORGANIZATION

Call to Order  
Roll Call  
Meditation and Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag  
Petitions and Requests  
Consent Agenda - Approval of Staff Recommendations (Items on the Consent Agenda [marked by \*] will be approved as recommended by staff, subject to removal from the Consent Agenda by Council.)  
Approval of Agenda and Additions

### COMMUNICATIONS

#### Presentations

- \* Minutes of Council Meetings
- Statement of Record - Closed Session, October 25, 2023
- Administrative Reports
- \* Committee Reports

### LEGISLATION

- An Ordinance of the Council of The City of Greenbelt Amending Chapter 10, "Licenses, Permits and Miscellaneous Business Regulations" of the Greenbelt City Code, To Add Article VII "Disposable Plastic Bags" to Prohibit a Retail Establishment from Providing a Plastic Carryout Bag to Customers, to Require a Retail Establishment to Charge At Least Ten Cents for Each Paper and Reusable Carryout Bag Provided to Customers and To Provide a Penalty for Violation
  - 1st Reading, Suspension of the Rules;
  - 2nd Reading, Adoption
- A Resolution to Repeal and Reenact with Amendment Resolution Number 2097 to Adopt Standing Rules for the Council of the City of Greenbelt, Maryland
  - 1st Reading

### OTHER BUSINESS

- Council Vacancy
- Prince George's County Crossing Guard Shortage
- Buddy Attick Lake Inclusive Playground
- Bradford Pear Tree Replacement Hanover Parkway
- HVAC Equipment Replacement at Springhill Lake Recreation Center
- Award of Purchase - Planning and Recreation Vehicles
- Reparation Commission Consultant Contract
- ARPA Police Vehicles Purchase
- ARPA Status Update
- Council Activities
- Council Reports
- Springhill Drive Bus Stop Accessibility
- Charlestowne Village Site Distance Complaint
- Greenbelt Access Television (GATe) MOU
- Resolution for Departure 23-008-DSDS, Greenbelt Honda
- MAGLEV Supplemental Letter
- Council Reconsideration of Advisory Board Resignation
- \* Meetings
- \* Stakeholders
- \* Re/Appointment to Advisory Board

In advance, the hearing impaired is advised to use MD RELAY at 711 to submit your questions/comments or contact the City Clerk at (301) 474-8000 or email [banderson@greenbeltmd.gov](mailto:banderson@greenbeltmd.gov).

## MEETINGS FOR DECEMBER 11 - 15

Monday, December 11 at 7:30 pm, **REGULAR MEETING**

Wednesday, December 13 at 7:30 pm, **WORK SESSION - PARKE CRESCENT APARTMENTS**

Thursday, December 14 at 7 pm, **COMMUNITY RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD, Agenda TBD**

In advance, the hearing impaired is advised to use MD RELAY at 711 to submit your questions/comments or contact the City Clerk at (301) 474-8000 or email [banderson@greenbeltmd.gov](mailto:banderson@greenbeltmd.gov). This schedule is subject to change. For confirmation that a meeting is being held call (301) 474-8000. For information on public participation for the meetings above, visit the meetings calendar at [www.greenbeltmd.gov/calendar](http://www.greenbeltmd.gov/calendar).

## EMERGENCY DIAPER DISTRIBUTION

The Emergency Diaper Distribution supports Greenbelt families in need of diapers. Greenbelt residents only, you must sign-up each month.  
To register: <https://forms.gle/28TFe4T1y83B9E8u8> or (240) 424-0302.

## GREENBELT ARPA GRANT PROGRAMS

Applications Rolling Through December 29, 2023

To better assist Greenbelt individuals, families, and businesses affected by COVID-19, Greenbelt's ARPA programs have extended deadlines through the end of the year for grants and other assistance.

To view grant programs, or to see how other ARPA programs are helping your community recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, visit [www.engagegreenbelt.org](http://www.engagegreenbelt.org).

## CURRENT CARES PROGRAMS

CARES is happy to provide the following programs FREE of charge this fall: Emergency Diaper Program, Family and Unpaid Caregiver Resource Fair, Alzheimer's Awareness Month Webinar Series, Coffee & Conversations, two Free Produce Distribution events, Mental Health and Suicide Prevention in Older Adults webinar, Staying Strong webinar, and more.

For descriptions and information, visit [www.greenbeltmd.gov/CAREsprogram](http://www.greenbeltmd.gov/CAREsprogram).

## SHOP WITH A COP

Please share a little holiday cheer



The Greenbelt Police Department is currently requesting monetary donations from local businesses and residents. These donations are tax-deductible and will be used exclusively to provide gifts to children and their families residing in the City of Greenbelt.

You can make donations by cash or check at the police station. If you choose to pay by check, please make it payable to the "City of Greenbelt." For additional information, contact MPO Rahman via email at [rahman@greenbeltmd.gov](mailto:rahman@greenbeltmd.gov).

## PARENTS NIGHT OUT (MONTHLY)

Friday, December 15, 5 - 8:30 pm, Community Center

Enjoy a night to yourself while your children make art, eat pizza, and play games at the Community Center (15 Crescent Rd). Ages 4-12.  
**Activity #233222-3:** R: \$20, NR \$25.

Registration info & more at [www.greenbeltmd.gov/activityguide](http://www.greenbeltmd.gov/activityguide).

## COFFEE & CONVERSATIONS | CAFÉ Y CONVERSACIONES

Tuesday, December 19, 10 - 11 am

Springhill Lake Recreation Center (Greenbelt West Residents Only)

Join us for Coffee & Conversations that will allow you to learn about the resources available in Greenbelt and meet those who live in your community. To register, call (240) 424-0302.

Unase a nosotros para Café y Conversaciones que le permitirán conocer los recursos disponibles en Greenbelt y conocer a quienes viven en su comunidad a partir del martes 19 de diciembre de 2023, de 10 a 11 am. Para registrarse, llame al (240) 424-0302.

## FREE PRODUCE DISTRIBUTION

### THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21

**Community Center:** 1-3 pm, Community Center, Ground Floor East.

**Contact:** [bgarcia@greenbeltmd.gov](mailto:bgarcia@greenbeltmd.gov).

Please note that individuals are kindly requested to refrain from forming a line for produce prior to 11:30 am.

## CITY FIBER OPTIC INSTALLATION PROJECT UNDERWAY

We're making our connectivity better! Please pardon our appearance as a City fiber optic installation project will take place on Crescent Road beginning the week of December 4, 2023, and is projected to last two months. Thank you!

## CONSIDER MAKING A DONATION TO ONE OF THE CITY'S CHARITABLE FUNDS

Agency Funds are managed but not financed by the City. All donations to the funds are used for the listed charitable purposes. The City of Greenbelt receives no portion of these funds nor does it charge an administrative fee for processing the donations

**GOOD SAMARITAN FUND:** This fund provides financial assistance to Greenbelt residents facing food insecurity and financial difficulty in paying for utilities (Electric, Phone, Internet, Water and Gas). This program receives funding from generous individuals, as well as Greenbelt faith communities and other civic associations. During the Coronavirus Pandemic, the Good Samaritan Fund is collecting monies to support the St. Hugh's Food Pantry and residents struggling to pay their utility bills.

**EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FUND:** Established to accept and disburse donations received to assist Greenbelt residents to pay rent to avoid possible eviction. Approximately a dozen individuals receive assistance from these funds each fiscal year.

**GREENBELT RECREATION:** Greenbelt Recreation receives contributions from various sources. The monetary donations are used to support camp scholarships, special events and other designated programs as specified by the donor. Monies are transferred to the General Fund to offset the program as appropriate.

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION:** Contributions are made to the Advisory Committee on Education (ACE). These monies fund ACE initiatives such as its scholarship fund.

## NOW YOU MAY DONATE ONLINE AT WWW.GREENBELTMD.GOV/DONATIONS

You can also mail a money order or check to: City of Greenbelt, 25 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, MD 20770. Please notate which fund in the notes section of the check. You may also use the drop box on the flag side of the building. Receipts will be provided and mailed out to you.

## ANIMAL SHELTER SEEKING DONATIONS

The Greenbelt Animal Shelter is in need of new and unopened dog toys, cat toys, Pine Cat Litter, wet adult cat food (any brand), Authority Adult and Kitten Cat Food (dry), Authority kitten wet food, Blue Buffalo Food (dry), Kongs (all sizes), essential oils that can be used for enrichment such as lemon, lavender, vanilla, feliway multicat diffuser for cats, pheromone plug ins for dogs, laundry detergent, bleach, dishwashing liquid, dog treats, Easy Cheese spray cans.

[Click here](#) to view our Amazon wish list or visit our website at [www.greenbeltmd.gov/animalsshelter](http://www.greenbeltmd.gov/animalsshelter) for more information.

## LEAF VACUUM SCHEDULE | FALL 2023-2024

The City Public Works Department will again collect loose leaves from the following areas with the leaf vacuum from October 30, 2023 until January 2024. We remind residents to rake the leaves to the curb, but not into the street, and to remove all sticks and stones from the pile as these can damage the machinery. Areas to be collected will be posted as in past years. We also remind residents NOT to park in front of leaf piles.

### DECEMBER 4 - 8

Boxwood

### DECEMBER 11 - 15

Woodland Hills

### DECEMBER 18 - 22

Lakeside, Greenspring I & II

### DECEMBER 26 - 29

Lakewood

## GREENBELT CITY CALENDAR

Be sure to check out the City calendar for all up to date events at [greenbeltmd.gov/calendar](http://greenbeltmd.gov/calendar).



## COMMITTEES & BOARDS VACANCIES VOLUNTEER TODAY!

Volunteering for City of Greenbelt Committees & Boards is an excellent opportunity to engage with your community and make a difference. Choose from a number of committees & boards such as the **Senior Citizens Advisory Committee, the Youth Advisory Committee, or the Advisory Committee on Education, Arts Advisory Board, Board of Elections, Community Relations Advisory Board, Employee Relations Advisory Board, Forest Preserve Advisory Board, Greenbelt Advisory Committee on Environmental Sustainability, or the Park and Recreation Advisory Board** and make a difference in Greenbelt!

By dedicating your time and expertise, you will help shape the future of Greenbelt and create a community that values the voices of all its residents. Take the first step towards making a positive impact and apply for one of these committee vacancies today!

Call (301) 474-8000.

## GREENBELT SAVE OUR SENIORS GRANT PROGRAM

Are you homebound and need help with personal care?

The Greenbelt Assistance in Living Program, in partnership with Pickett Fences Senior Services, has been awarded a grant to provide temporary home health support, bathroom safety assessment, and equipment to residents 60+ or 50+ with a disability, who reside within incorporated Greenbelt. During this time staff will work to identify and link residents with long-term support programs.

### Benefits:

- RN Assessment
- Bathroom Safety Assessment and Equipment
- Home Health Visits

### Limited spots are available!

Please email Trinity Cephas, GAIL Student Intern, for more information at [tcephas@greenbeltmd.gov](mailto:tcephas@greenbeltmd.gov) or call the Bilingual Health Caseworker, Brendy Garcia, at (240) 424-0302 or [bgarcia@greenbeltmd.gov](mailto:bgarcia@greenbeltmd.gov).

## HOLIDAY FOOD BOX REGISTRATION OPEN

Call Brendy Garcia at (240) 424-0302 or email [bgarcia@greenbeltmd.gov](mailto:bgarcia@greenbeltmd.gov).

## BRING YOUR OWN BAG

Effective January 1, 2024, the City of Greenbelt's Bring Your Own Bag bill aims to reduce single-use plastic bag waste and litter in our local waterways and tributary system.

The Bring Your Own Bag bill will prohibit a retail establishment from providing a plastic carryout bag to shoppers and can charge at least 10 cents for each paper bag provided to a customer at the point of sale.

For more information on this bill, visit [www.greenbeltmd.gov/BYOBag](http://www.greenbeltmd.gov/BYOBag).



## HAMLIN continued from page 1

WETA has also had learning programs through PGCMLS and Hamlin said the station told her she was on their radar to be nominated for the award.

### Selection

PBS stations across the country nominate educators through an open call, then they review candidates and select the class of honorees to join the program, explained Terezon via email.

Early Learning Champions are placed in a two-year cohort and are offered professional training and development. This includes attending workshops at the National Association for the Education of Young Children and working with organizations like Fred Rogers Productions and PBS.

Hamlin is a part of various county, state and national groups whose members share ideas for how childhood education can be improved. “I’m looking forward to the professional development that is offered to us and then we’ll also really be working with our local PBS station, which is WETA, for programming to reach kids, parents and childcare providers,” she told the News Review.

“It’s good to see what people in other parts of the country are doing ... sometimes you know that it will work here and other times it wouldn’t because of different situations libraries are in,” said Hamlin.

She would encourage those interested in early childhood education to consider becoming a librarian. She said she loves how the library is a less stressful learning environment than school can be. “There are things that they can learn about on their own that may not be something they’re learning about in school and I think it empowers them,” Hamlin said.

### Family Engagement

A mother herself, Hamlin says that family engagement is a crucial part of early child development, and she has brought a lot of these experiences to the county. About seven years ago, Hamlin helped bring Dolly Parton’s



Pam Hamlin of Greenbelt, center, is pictured with fellow PBS Kids Early Learning Champions, Molly Clark of Idaho, left, and Dagmar Morales Serrano of Kentucky.

Imagination Library program to the county. Books From Birth, administered through PGCMLS, sends a free book to children’s homes each month until their fifth birthday. “I think when you’ve got books in the home and parents are interacting with their kids, it’s a great thing,” she said.

Hamlin also said the program gives books to some families who otherwise would not have books in their homes. And now, PGCMLS has partnerships with some hospitals in the county, so parents are able to sign their newborns up right away.

But libraries have more to offer than just books. “We have so much going on. We have STEM kits,” said Hamlin. “We do STEM programs for elementary kids, we have teen programs.”

Hamlin optimizes the learning experience for everyone involved. Parents join in for activities like story time and she tries to get them involved as much as possible, which helps engage children. She said that when a parent is participating or reading, their child is more likely to take an active role. But family engagement doesn’t end there. Hamlin

said the time children spend with their parents learning at home is immensely important for kids. She likes to give parents what she calls “early literacy tips.”

“We try to do one little fun fact for the parents to take home each time to either encourage them to keep doing what they’re doing,” she explained, “or go, ‘Hey, I never thought about that ...’ and they’ll take some of that home.”

Hamlin said that even before starting school, parents should take on some form of education with their children. Simply singing songs and nursery rhymes is a great way to start, and incorporating books prepares them for when they start reading in school. “We now know that the fastest brain development is between birth and 3,” said Hamlin, “so we want families to know this is an important age.”

### Integrating Media

In an era of technology, Hamlin is now tasked with integrating media into learning. While there are beneficial learning tools available through PBS Kids and Fred Rogers Productions, she said they must be used properly to be effective. She recommends that families do activities and watch programs together rather than giving a child an iPad when they’re bored.

With a new generation of so-called “iPad kids,” it’s partly up to educators like Hamlin to help children make friends and keep them from being attached to a device. “Sometimes we’re the first group that a child may be in ... so they’re learning how to socialize, how to take turns, how to answer questions,” Hamlin said, noting that it’s important to teach social skills and emotion in practice, just like the ABCs.

Hamlin said she believes the work PGCMLS does with WETA and PBS provides strong opportunities for early childhood education. These professionals are helping children learn how to act toward new faces for the first time, and Hamlin believes more investment should be made to make quality care available for each child in their earliest years.

“I want to empower parents because you know your child best, you’re their first and best teacher and we’re here to support you,” said Hamlin.

*Cavit Ireland is a student at the University of Maryland Philip Merrill College of Journalism writing for the News Review.*

## LEADERSHIP continued from page 1

exemplifies, serve as community leaders. Jordan participated in the Legacy Leadership Institute on Municipal Government. The focus on municipalities “served me well in maintaining relationships with leaders in the Greenbelt community and with leaders from surrounding municipalities, the county, state and federal delegations,” he told the News Review. He expressed his great appreciation for programs such as the Greenbelt Intergenerational Volunteer Exchange Service, which could benefit from future LLIPP participants.

### Molly Lester

Greenbelt resident Molly Lester had an interest in public policy and, upon retiring, she was able to pursue it through the LLIPP program. The current LLIPP program gives participants 64 hours of instruction over eight weeks on the history of the State of Maryland, branches of government, the legislative process, legislative and senate committees, budgets and finance, and public policy. According to the School of Public Health information, it evolved to fill a need for additional assistance to supplement the work of elected officials and nonprofit agency staff working to advance issues and public programs. After her training, Lester spent two years helping identify and track legislation for the Legislative and Government Affairs Committee. She also gained exposure to other Maryland locales’ legislative issues when she worked with a state senator representing the Eastern Shore. Nor did Lester forget her home turf. Greenbelt also benefitted from her LLIPP training and experience through her advocacy for the Greenbelt Neighborhood Conservation Overlay Zone Committee that addressed zoning issues related to the height, density and massing of buildings in Greenbelt’s historic core.

### Donna Hoffmeister

Donna Hoffmeister is another Greenbelt resident LLIPP participant. Although already politically active, she was new to Maryland when she joined the program and wanted to become more knowledgeable about the state’s legis-

lature. Her first volunteer assignment as a legislative leader was in the office of Delegate Barbara Frush (District 21). Hoffmeister’s contributions included preparing the delegate for her committee meetings. “It was during this time that I learned my way around the State House, the Senate and the Legislative Services Office,” she told the News Review. Her later assignments included working with Delegate Darryl Barnes (District 25) and Delegate Nicole Williams (District 22). During that time, Hoffmeister supported Williams in opposing the maglev train project.

### Michael Hartman

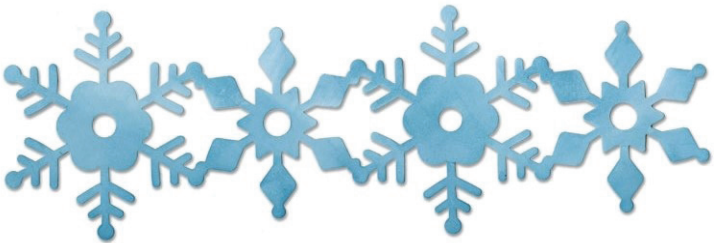
Greenbelt resident Michael Hartman is a retired certified sign language interpreter and spent years on Capitol Hill interpreting for legislative hearings, meetings of legislators and meetings with leaders in the Disability Rights movement. Through LLIPP, Hartman became an intern in then-Delegate Alonzo Washington’s office for two years. He said that time provided opportunities to see how legislation is made and understand the differences between federal and state legislative processes. Hartman said post-program participation, “Gave me further insight into how decision makers came to conclusions about issues, how best to address them and how influencers affect the legislative process.”

### Murray and Carol Malveaux

Murray and Carol Malveaux worked with Maryland legislators, both senators and delegates, observing the processes of government, how bills get passed and the role of lobbyists. Their goal is “to help people understand the functions of the legislative process and their role as citizens ... and how they can get important issues addressed and resolved.”

The program is also beneficial to anyone who wants to advocate for contemporary issues and to share them with elected officials at the municipal, county, state and federal levels of government. Participants have shown their satisfaction in the LLIPP with comments ranging from the program transforming retirement years, to

See **LEADERSHIP**, page 11



## FBI continued from page 1

Chris Van Hollen, U.S. Representatives Steny Hoyer, Dutch Ruppersberger, John Sarbanes, Kweisi Mfume, Jamie Raskin, David Trone and Glenn Ivey, and Prince George’s County Executive Angela Alsobrooks. “GSA determined that Greenbelt offers the lowest price,” said the joint statement, “and best value to taxpayers, the easiest access to public transportation, the most schedule certainty to ensure the FBI can move to a new headquarters that meets its mission and security needs as soon as possible, and the greatest opportunity to advance the Biden-Harris Administration’s equity goals. The GSA made its decision accordingly. Although some may not like that outcome, the GSA has clearly demonstrated that this process was transparent.”

It is currently unclear what delaying effect the review will create. When GSA made its Greenbelt selection announcement, they called it a final decision. At that time, GSA anticipated 42 months before beginning construction, after site purchase, congressional coordination, final environmental impact review, designs and contracting with architects and construction companies.

The Virginia delegation’s letter to Erickson said, “The GSA must pause all activities related to the relocation until the IG’s investigation is complete.” The Maryland statement began with, “Let us be perfectly clear: the new FBI headquarters project is moving forward.” Erickson’s response to the Virginia delegation did not discuss whether the relocation effort would pause or proceed.

ELECTIONS continued from page 1

to council by that vote. (The non-winning candidate with the largest number of votes in November was Matthew Inzeo.) The Board states that while council has every legal right to fill the seat by their own vote without any consultation with citizens, “This option is the least democratic, in the sense that it allows no voter or public participation, but it allows the most prompt and least costly action by council.”

Seek Public Input

Public hearings are the second option offered to the council by the BOE, which would give citizens a chance to weigh in. Hearings could be held to both discuss how the seat should be filled, and after nominations or petitions, to query or advocate for candidates.

The BOE asks council to send notification of hearings to citizens by postal mail in addition to advertising on their website and in the News Review. They note that while hearings would allow for some public input and would not entail great cost, only a small proportion of Greenbelt voters would participate in them and be heard.

A Ballot of Candidates

The third option offered by the BOE is a new vote by which citizens would recommend to council which candidate they prefer from a ballot of potential councilmembers. Council, for their part, could commit themselves to elect the person preferred by the voters. In their memo, the BOE says, “We believe ... that such a process would be valid and appropriate, as long as it is understood that the section [of the Charter] requires council to take the final action.”

In the view of the BOE, this third option, “involving a referral election for all voters, is clearly the most democratic.” The price to be paid for that process would

be more time and a higher cost. The BOE describes the stages of such an electoral process. First, a notice would be mailed to voters about the upcoming election, with a call for candidates to submit petitions to run. Mail-in ballots would then be sent to voters with the option of mailing or using a dropbox to return them. This mail-in process would “save a significant amount of time and expense” compared to a traditional in-person election, said the BOE. Once the result was reported to council and the public, council would cast their final vote to select a councilmember. The hope is that this would be completed by mid-March 2024.

In this scenario, while the electoral process is playing out, the BOE suggests council may wish to appoint an interim councilmember. “It may be best,” they say, “in the interest of fairness, for the council to choose someone who does not intend to campaign for a permanent seat.”

Council scheduled a worksession to discuss filling the vacancy for Wednesday, December 6 at 7:30 p.m. The next regular council meeting will be Monday, December 11 at 7:30 p.m.

Options for Filling the Vacancy

Council may choose any citizen of Greenbelt who is a registered voter. Council may hold public hearings to give citizens a chance to weigh in on how the seat should be filled, after which council would vote on whom to appoint. A new election could be held with voters choosing from a ballot of potential councilmembers. Council could commit to elect the person preferred by voters.

Council Gets Updates on BARC

by Deanna Dawson

The Greenbelt City Council met virtually on November 22 in a worksession with representatives from the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC). Tom Shanower, director of the Northeast Area of the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), Acting BARC Director Le Ann Blomberg and Tanya Brown of the ARS Office of Communications were present. (Center Director Howard Zhang currently is serving a detail as acting associate director of the Northeast Area office.) They gave an overview of BARC and discussed some new issues but provided no updates on the development projects on BARC lands that are of concern to Greenbelters, namely construction of a Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) currency production facility and the proposed maglev train project. Mayor Emmett Jordan asked most questions for council, including those formulated for the agenda and some of his own.

Overview

Shanower and Blomberg remarked that their Thanksgiving Eve meeting with council was timely as BARC was where the popular Beltsville White Turkey was developed. Shanower stated that they represent three ARS entities: BARC, the Beltsville Human Nutrition Research Center and the U.S. National Arboretum, whose research arm is housed at BARC. Blomberg said that BARC is still the largest ARS facility in the U.S. and is a flagship agricultural research institution globally. There currently are about 700 employees across the three entities, including facilities and farm support (but not contractors or collaborators). Shanower added that people are their most important resource and there are eight or nine super-grade scientists on staff. He said



PHOTO BY DEANNA DAWSON

Although BARC representatives at the November 22 worksession offered no updates on the BEP project, a visit to the site on November 19 revealed that buildings on the site had been demolished, with only rubble remaining.

that research is back 100 percent following the hiatus of some projects during the Covid pandemic, although more researchers than previously are teleworking.

Blomberg said that BARC’s focus is to solve agriculture problems in the U.S., many of which are relevant to the state of Maryland. She highlighted a few areas of research: monitoring and utilizing water in an efficient, sustainable manner; preserving and sharing plant and animal germplasm; bee health; food safety; sustainable farming practices; and maintaining collections of fungi, nematodes and, in collaboration with the Smithsonian Institution, insects.

In response to questions, Blomberg said there is minimal research underway now on composting, explaining that BARC’s research focus is reviewed and reprioritized every five years. Longitudinal studies continue in fields along Edmonston Road and, for more than 30 years, along Soil Conservation Road, in collaboration with NASA and

NOAA to remotely assess soil water levels. When asked if any of BARC’s research is geared to small family farms, Shanower said the research does not target farmers specifically but addresses agricultural constraints and problems in general. Blomberg added that there is a concern about equitability however.

See BARC, page 11

Greenbelt Listings



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# Obituaries continued

Harriet is survived by her loving husband David; two sons: Richard Ginsburg (Rhonda) and Michael Ginsburg; three grandchildren: Leah Alexander (Kevin), Amber Ginsburg and Sierra Ginsburg; along with her great-grandchild, Mason Alexander and her twin sister, Gloria Kitay. She will also be missed by her nieces, nephews and friends. She was preceded in death by her parents, Luba and Morris Gherts.

A funeral service will be held in accordance with Jewish customs to honor Harriet Ginsburg's life and legacy. In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests donations be made to Chabad of Upper Montgomery County, as Harriet had a deep commitment to helping those in need.

Information about services is available through Borgwardt Funeral Home.

-The Ginsburg Family

## Ellen Yoko Sakai

On Wednesday, November 8, 2023, Ellen Yoko Sakai, of Ridge Road and a cherished member of GHI and the Greenbelt community for 53 years, died. She was 80.

Ellen was the beloved sister of Michiko (Seino) Koreeda, a loving aunt to Yuka, Hitoshi and Ria, and the devoted daughter of the late Yoshio and Masako Seino.

Born on October 23, 1943, in Madison College, Tenn., Ellen made the newspapers for being the first person of Japanese descent to be born in Tennessee. Even from an early age, she dedicated her life to serving others. Her journey in education began at the tender age of 8 when she was first bitten by the teaching bug, and she gave her first piano lesson at the age of 11. She had a passion for teaching music, a commitment she continued until her death.

Ellen's journey into professional piano teaching led her to Washington, D.C., at the Catholic University of America under the tutelage of Emerson Meyers, and then to Maryland where she would attend the University of Maryland, win the Homer L. Ulrich award for outstanding performance and earn her master's degree under Dr. Stewart Gordon. Ellen also belonged to many professional organizations, including the Maryland State Music Teachers' Association and Prince George's County Music Teachers Association. She served as the music theory chairperson for the latter for over 20 years, and worked hard administering and scoring the Gail F. McDonald High School Piano Examinations.

Throughout her life, Ms. Sakai nurtured the talents of young performers, not only guiding their



PHOTO COURTESY THE FAMILY

musical development but also fostering their spiritual and moral growth. Building and maintaining a thriving piano studio of young pianists, her dedication to teaching persisted even as her health waned, culminating in the combined celebration of her 80th birthday and a piano recital performed by her current students. Nearly a hundred friends, former students and their families attended to wish her well.

During her recent illness, the extent of Ellen's impact was evident in the outpouring of affection from students, both current and former, many of whom had been under her tutelage two to three decades prior. She was deluged by phone calls, text messages, cards, emails and visits that brought her great comfort during her final days.

"I was a neighbor in her court who would frequently see Ellen up and about especially with her dog Muffin," said Joe Robbins. "Ellen was so kind, friendly and had a beautiful smile that would make my day! May there be some part of Ellen (her smile & kindness) that thrives within each of us."

Ellen was preceded in death by her parents, Yoshio and Masako and her beloved dog Muffin. She is also survived by numerous friends, colleagues, students – both current and former – and her feline companion, Kitsia. A celebration of Ellen Yoko Sakai's life took place on Friday, November 24, 2023 at Sligo Seventh Day Adventist Church in Takoma Park, and was followed by a graveside service at George Washington Cemetery in Adelphi.



# There's No Place Like Home

by Robin Olson

*As some of you enjoy visitors coming home to Greenbelt for the holidays, this author shares some favorite stops for her son on homecomings.*

My 32-year-old son, Evan, was born and raised in Greenbelt. He did all the typical things. He went to Greenbelt Nursery School back when it was in the Greenbelt Community Church, Mom's Morning Out with Miss Gaye, spent his summers at Camp Pine Tree, played on every baseball and basketball team Greenbelt had to offer and graduated from Eleanor Roosevelt High School. He delivered the News Review and worked at the Fitness Center. He went to college in Tampa and never lived here more than a summer after that.

The weekend before Labor Day, he came into town to be the best man at a friend's wedding.

He currently lives in Colorado. Everyone loves coming home to their favorite foods, and Evan is no different. When his



PHOTO BY MORGAN DONOVAN

No visit to Greenbelt is complete without a stop at Co-op. Evan, left, poses with his mom and a new squeaky toy for his dog.

plane landed, the first thing he wanted was an Italian boat from Three Brothers. His next fabulous home-cooked meal was from Generous Joe's, the delicious crab cake that Aaron makes.

We stopped in at many of the local businesses at the Center to say hello to people who have known Evan forever. There were

Jenny and Christy at the Co-op, Maria at the beauty shop and a customer, Sue, and the guy who owns the Chinese restaurant. Evan was amazed at how thrilled everyone was to see him and how he remembered everyone. I said, 10 minutes of your time and look how many smiles you put on peoples' faces.

# Letters continued

blanket of leaves under the large trees in front of the Greenbelt Community Center and the Greenbelt Library. This was a great example of how we can support the health of our local ecosystem while also leaving plenty of room for residents to play on the surrounding grassy areas. Even during a windy day on Tuesday 11/28, most of the leaves remained in place under the tree canopy. Thanks for "leaving the leaves" in some of our public areas!

Erica Hernandez

**Filling the Vacant Seat**

With the passing of Councilmember Ric Gordon, my thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Carla Gordon, and his family at this time. It is my fervent hope that Carla and the Gordon family can find a place of solace during this time of grief and sorrow.

The loss of Councilmember Gordon creates a vacant position on the council. According to the City Charter, council has two options to fill this position – they may either choose to appoint a member to serve or call a special election to fill the position. Should council choose to appoint someone to this position, I feel the candidate from the 2023 elec-

tion with the next highest vote count who was not elected should be the appointee. My rationale is that all of the 2023 candidates put forth considerable time and effort to run for elected office, incurring significant time commitments and financial resources. Those who came up short therefore should not be excluded from consideration.

In conclusion, I am in support of Matthew Inzeo as the candidate receiving the highest number of votes in the 2023 election who was not chosen to serve on council, receiving 1,085 votes, and outpolling the remaining candidates by a wide margin.

Scott Legendre

See LETTERS, page 12

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# Police Blotter

Incidents reported here occurred November 27 to December 4, 2023. Readers are encouraged to contact the police if they have information that may aid in an enquiry. Call the non-emergency number 301-474-7200 or email [pd@greenbeltmd.gov](mailto:pd@greenbeltmd.gov). Times provided are when the incidents were reported.

Greenbelt Police Department reported two deaths; six domestic disputes, including two leading to arrest; and two mental health diversions involving attempted suicide. A missing juvenile case on December 1 near 9000 Breezewood Terrace was resolved.

### Shooting

On November 29 at 9:06 a.m. near 9300 Edmonston Road, a man was shot, sustaining a non-life-threatening injury.

### Robbery

On November 27 at 8:45 p.m. near 5200 Stream Bank Lane, a man attempting to complete an online electronic equipment sale was robbed at gunpoint, and the suspect fled in a vehicle.

On December 3 at 9:25 p.m. near 9100 Springhill Lane, a woman was pushed down from behind by two men who stole her money and phone, and fled in a silver-colored truck.

On December 1 at 4:08 p.m. near 9200 Springhill Lane, a boy was walking home when he was assaulted and had his shoes stolen. The boy knew the assailants from school.

### DUI Arrests

In two incidents, on November 29 at 12:53 a.m. near 7600 Greenbelt Road, and on December 2 at 10:35 p.m. near Greenbelt Road and Edmonston Road, two vehicle accidents led to DUI arrests.

On December 1 at 2:26 a.m. near Greenbelt Road and Kenilworth Avenue, a car was driving on the wrong side of the road toward oncoming traffic; the driver appeared intoxicated and was charged with all appropriate DUI-related traffic citations.

On December 3 at 4:39 a.m. near 20 Court Southway a vehicle was struck and the driver left the scene but was found and arrested for DUI.

### Disorderly

On December 2 at 4:47 p.m. near 7800 Walker Drive, a disorderly hotel guest refused to leave and was arrested.

### Suspicious Person

On November 29 at 9:50 a.m. near 7900 Mandan Road, a man was locked out of his apartment by another man who lived in the unit below and may have gotten confused.

### Theft

On November 27 near 6100 Breezewood Drive, a boy took an Amazon package that was left at the front door. On November 29 near 400 Ridge Road, a package was stolen after being delivered. On December 1 at 8:01 p.m. near 6000 Greenbelt Road, someone

ran by and stole the hat off a man's head. On December 1 near 7900 Mandan Road, a doorbell camera recorded a man stealing the contents of a package and leaving the empty box at the door.

### Commercial Theft

On November 27 at 2:20 p.m. near 7500 Greenbelt Road, two women and a man stole 73 candles before fleeing in a navy-blue Nissan Altima. On November 30 at 3:37 p.m. near 7400 Greenbelt Road, a man stole clothes. On December 1 at 3:24 p.m. near 6100 Greenbelt Road, someone stole hygiene products. On December 2 at 2:50 p.m. near 6100 Greenbelt Road, a man was caught stealing, arrested and issued a criminal citation. On December 2 at 7:37 p.m. near 6000 Greenbelt Road, a man was caught stealing shirts and was banned. On December 3 at 9:29 a.m. near 6100 Greenbelt Road, a shoplifter known to police was recorded stealing after being criminally cited the day before; the store will press charges. In two incidents on December 3, at 9:41 a.m. and at 9:59 a.m. near 6100 Greenbelt Road, a man stole multiple items.

### Fraud

On November 27 near 16 Court Ridge Road, an electricity account was opened falsely under a man's name. In two incidents on December 1, near 6440 Cherrywood Lane and near 100 Centerway, money was taken from a bank account. On December 1 near 7700 Greenbelt Road, someone called pretending to be from a bank, obtained account information and stole a large amount of money. On December 1 near 7200 Hanover Drive, a man charged a hotel room to a fraudulent card; when confronted, he fled. On December 3 near 7500 Greenbelt Road, a store employee received a call from someone posing as a manager telling her to deposit the store's cash into a different bank account.

### Vandalism

On November 27 at 3:00 p.m. near 7300 Hanover Parkway, a

rock was thrown through a storefront window. On November 29 at 1:23 p.m. near 7800 Mandan Road, a man driving a blue Ford SUV threw a rock at a vehicle, which damaged the door and mirror.

### Vehicle Crimes Stolen Vehicles

Six vehicles were stolen, including, on November 29 near 200 Lakeside Drive, a 2024 Chevy Camaro (Md. T1560126); near 6100 Springhill Terrace, a silver Ford Focus (Md. 8FM5238); and near 5800 Cherrywood Lane, a blue 2018 Toyota Camry (Md. 9FE7473); on December 2 near 5800 Cherrywood Lane, a 2018 Toyota Corolla (Md. 7DS6928); on December 3 near 5800 Cherrywood Terrace, a silver 2017 Toyota Camry (Md. 1ER0939); and near 5700 Greenbelt Metro Drive, a light blue Hyundai Sonata (Md. 7BP7699). On December 3 near 10 Court Southway, a red 2003 Honda Accord (Md. 8EL2903) was stolen after it was left running with the keys in the ignition.

### Stolen Vehicles Recovered

On November 29 near 7501 Greenway Center Drive, a vehicle stolen from Virginia was recovered. On December 1 at 1:04 a.m. near 9100 Springhill Lane, officers located a stolen 2013 Hyundai Elantra in the middle of the roadway with the lights on, and a damaged window and ignition. On December 1 at 5:02 a.m. near 7300 Hanover Parkway, officers recovered a Honda stolen from a gas station earlier that night. On December 2 at 4:13 p.m. near 7600 Greenbelt Road, a man called about suspicious people looking at a vehicle he'd purchased, which was actually a stolen vehicle that had been re-VINed.

### Attempted Theft of Vehicles

On November 29 at 3:49 a.m. near 6400 Cherrywood Lane, when police arrived to investigate a report of tampering, the suspects fled in two different vehicles. On November 29 at 5:54 p.m. near 7400 Morrison Drive, juveniles tampering with a

Hyundai were observed by a witness with a doorbell camera; they fled after damaging the window and ignition. On December 2 at 5:06 p.m. near 6400 Cherrywood Lane, someone tried to steal a vehicle.

### Theft from Auto

On November 29 at 12:31 p.m. near 6300 Ivy Lane, a man was arrested for going into vehicles.

In two incidents on November 27, near 7500 Mandan Road and near 100 Julian Court, items were stolen from unlocked vehicles. On November 29 near 8000 Greenbelt Station Parkway, a 2014 Ford Explorer was broken into and items were stolen; near 6400 Cherrywood Lane, a woman noticed marijuana residue on her

seat and a lighter on the floor, and items were missing; and near 9100 Edmonston Court, a tag was stolen. Tires were stolen December 1, near 6200 Springhill Court from a Toyota Camry, and near Edmonston Road and Edmonston Court from a Honda Civic. On December 3 near 20 Court Ridge Road, someone broke into a vehicle and stole a wallet. On December 3, near 7600 Mandan Road, a vehicle window was damaged and items were stolen; and near 9000 Breezewood Terrace, a piece of trim was stolen from a vehicle.

### Recovered Stolen Tag

On December 1 near 6100 Breezewood Court, a stolen tag was recovered.



## Bring Your Own Bag: Objectives of the Ban

by John Lippert

The objective of the plastic bag ban is to reduce plastic pollution and single-use waste and increase the use of reusable carryout bags or using no carryout bag. Requiring retailers to charge at least 10 cents for paper bags reduces the demand for them and is an incentive for shoppers to bring their own bag.

Plastic bags are a significant source of litter, pollute waterways and threaten human health and wildlife.

Greenbelt residents use an estimated nine million plastic carryout bags annually. At grocery stores in Greenbelt that provide complimentary plastic bags, 74 percent of shoppers take them and at the Greenbelt Target, 84 percent take them. These bags have about a 15-minute "working life" but persist in the environment beyond our lifetimes.

Littered plastic bags end up in local waterways and flow down to the Chesapeake Bay and the ocean, where they degrade into microplastics, absorbing toxic chemicals. Plastic bags and microplastics are ingested by marine life, injuring and killing fish, seabirds and marine mammals. On land, plastic bag litter is a lethal threat to livestock and wildlife.

Scientists estimate that humans are ingesting as much as a credit card's worth of plastic weekly. The health effects of plastic particles, additives and toxins are concerning.

For more details, email Greenbelt Sustainability Coordinator Luisa Robles at [lroble@greenbeltmd.gov](mailto:lroble@greenbeltmd.gov).

John Lippert is chair of the Greenbelt Advisory Committee on Environmental Sustainability (Green ACES).



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BARC continued from page 7

**Master Plan, Non-ARS Projects**  
Shanower reported that the BARC master plan continues to be updated but needs employee review before it will be released. The vision for the master plan is a safe, energy efficient, environmentally friendly center for world-class research. Regarding the BEP project, Shanower said they have no information; Chuck Davis of BEP is the point of contact for that project. The site for the facility was transferred to the Treasury Department in 2022 and, following completion of the Final Environmental Impact, the project is moving forward without additional BARC input or review. Similarly, Shanower had little to say about maglev other than to note that U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and ARS are monitoring any developments. He emphasized that the focus of his office is to ensure that scientists have the support and resources needed to conduct high-quality research.

**Buildings**  
Councilmember Rodney Roberts commented that there are buildings falling down all around BARC and many have been outfitted with new generators, noting that fixing roofs would be a far more efficient way to maintain buildings. Shanower replied that the average age of BARC buildings is 68 years; infrastructure is being upgraded on some buildings, with generators installed if determined to be energy efficient. Blomberg said that part of the master plan is to consolidate the BARC campuses and modernize buildings that will continue to be used, noting that renovations will begin soon on Buildings 2 and 5, among the historic buildings on Route 1, and renovation of Building 307 on Powder Mill Road was completed last year.

She said there currently are 207 “active” buildings on BARC; the master plan will downsize the number of buildings, in particular older buildings that were constructed for research that has been phased out. Following review by the Maryland Historical Trust, a list of buildings has been designated for teardown (see [greenbeltnewsreview.com/issues/GNR20220901.pdf](http://greenbeltnewsreview.com/issues/GNR20220901.pdf)); demolition will start this fiscal year if funding is available. Blomberg noted that the historic Log Lodge continues to be maintained, with funds provided by USDA. The facility is used for occasional ARS meetings and is available for use by other agencies.

**Budget**  
Shanower remarked that the U.S. Senate has passed this year’s appropriation bill for USDA but the House has not. Annual funding for BARC has been about \$98 million, \$132 million including the nutrition lab and arboretum. Blomberg said that federal funding has gone up over the six years she has been at BARC, although the increases do not ac-

count for inflation. She noted that scientists also brought in \$15 million in fiscal year 2023 through grants and partnerships.

**Transportation, Roads**  
Shanower reported that the Beltsville location is committed to transition to a zero-emission federal vehicle fleet and there is a shuttle between BARC and the Greenbelt Metro Station. Jordan noted that some BARC employees regularly bike to work and BARC roads are popular among recreational cyclists. He asked about traffic enforcement, especially along Soil Conservation Road. Blomberg replied that BARC has no uniformed police officers although U.S. Park Police occasionally patrol BARC roads and issue traffic citations. Resident Martha Tomecek later added that BARC is responsible only for Powder Mill Road and Research Road, other roads being county-maintained. This rules out the possibility of restricting access to Beaver Dam Road, which Greenbelt cyclists and walkers would like to see.

**Other Environmental Issues**  
Blomberg said that BARC’s Environmental Management Unit works closely with the Maryland Department of the Environment, and when disused buildings are demolished their sites will be returned to a natural state, reducing the total footprint of impervious surfaces. Work continues on remediation of contaminated sites on BARC. Blomberg noted that initially there were 167 sites of concern, which had been reduced to 63, and currently 21 sites are being worked on, with recent annual budgets of \$1.3 million.

**Outreach**  
Blomberg said that the public can learn about and support BARC programs through the nonprofit Friends of Agricultural Research-Beltsville. In closing, Shanower stated his intention to revive the BARC Field Day, which was remembered fondly by meeting participants, and Blomberg offered to arrange a tour of BARC for councilmembers. In his final remarks at a council meeting, Councilmember Ric Gordon thanked the ARS representatives for coming and said he enjoyed last year’s Building 307 rededication and looked forward to visiting BARC again.





PHOTO BY JOHN CAMPANILE

Conductor Joan Rackney leads the Greenbelt Concert Band during a December 4 performance at the Mormon Temple.

LEADERSHIP continued from page 6

providing an eye-opening experience on the inner workings of the General Assembly, to applying post-program learning to other volunteer support. Wesley Queen, director of the Legacy Leadership Institute for Public Policy, said the LLIPP program, which was started in 2002, has produced more than 400 participants. “The program is still active,” he said. “This year’s class started in September. Each year, there are many requests from legislative offices for Legacy Leaders to serve. In fact, each year, we have more requests than there are participants to fill the placements. A significant percentage of the participants have gone on to permanent positions either in the offices of legislators or to positions with civic and community organizations.” The LLIPP program is considering reviving elements of the program that were based in local municipalities in Prince George’s and Montgomery counties. Lester said she

continues to share the knowledge she gained in the LLIPP program about the legislative process (and state government) with others. “Since I believe a healthy democracy requires active participation and engagement by its citizens, we should strive to find pathways to work together, serve our communities and protect our democracy.” Questions about the Legacy Leaders program can be directed all year round to Queen at [wqueen@umd.edu](mailto:wqueen@umd.edu) or 301-405-2529.

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# Councilmember Ric Gordon Honored at Franklin Park Vigil

by Melissa Sites



Friends and neighbors come together for Ric at Franklin Park on November 30.

More than fifty people gathered Thursday night near the Franklin Park Resident Services building to pay tribute by candlelight to the memory of beloved Greenbelt City Councilmember Ric Gordon. Pastor Claude Jennings of Impact Fellowship opened the vigil with prayer. Lois Rosado led a round of This Little Light of Mine, and read a poem, When Great Trees Fall, by Maya Angelou, which had been shared via email by local poetry supporter Effie Levner. Carolyn Lambright-Davis followed by mentioning Gordon’s attention to Greenbelt’s children.

Greenbelt Mayor Pro Tem Kristen Weaver tearfully noted that Gordon’s loss leaves a huge gap in the city council and the community at large. Recently elected Councilmember Danielle McKinney, the council’s first woman of color, remembered Gordon’s support. “He made me feel like I could do this,” she said. “He was the very first person who called,” she said, “when I first decided to run ... There

was never a time when he was not connecting or introducing people. For him, it was never a competition. It was always about getting things done.” Gordon helped McKinney find her way at council meetings. “Use Your Voice,” he urged her, in the last text message she received from him. Konrad Herling said, “He changed us all for the better.” Councilmembers Rodney Roberts and Jenni Pompei were also present.

Monica Casanas, mayor of Colmar Manor, said that Gordon was always kind and welcoming. “I thought he was the mayor of Greenbelt,” she said with a smile. “No matter who you were, he was open and kind. He was an example to the rest of us.” Celina Benitez, mayor of Mount Rainier, pointed out that Gordon had requested an endorsement from the three Maryland Latina mayors, which impressed her. (Brentwood Mayor Rocio Treminio-Lopez is the third.) Benitez also greatly respected Gordon’s work with the Maryland Mu-

nicipal League and the Prince George’s Municipal Association. Gordon supported voting rights for noncitizen residents of Greenbelt, which passed as a nonbinding referendum by a wide margin in the 2023 election. “He has led the way to do what’s right,” Benitez said.

Management representatives from Franklin Park were thankful to Gordon for the work he had done there, including helping plan the distribution of over 400 turkeys at his third Thanksgiving and Things Giveaway. In a great example of Gordon’s talent at imagining events that brought people together, the Giveaway involved Franklin Park management, Ecolab Ecoessence, Reassurance Counseling Center, RUAK (Random Unselfish Acts of Kindness), Impact Fellowship and Greenbelt Police officers, most of whom were represented at the vigil. “We’ll keep on doing the work he envisioned,” a Franklin Park spokesperson promised.

## Letters continued

### Ric Gordon Enriched Us All

Ric was so alive, with a wonderful spirit, reaching out to those who had not felt included and making our community even closer at a time when it can be so easy to be divided. He was a unifier with a vision of how we could build an even stronger community and stretch our historic vision in the process.

His words had breadth and depth, backed by his personal actions, be it bringing books and clothes to those in need or reaching out to others to help in that effort. He gave all of us hope that we could do more and, in the process, truly enjoy and care for each other.

A genuine listener, Ric encouraged people to be better listeners themselves. His outreach included connection to our LGBTQ+ community and strong support for expanding opportunities for residents to vote, including those not yet citizens. His vision was to broaden our perspective so that the goals of all Greenbelters could be realized.

Equally important, he strove, in tandem with his city council colleagues, to give true thanks and greater compensation to all of our hard-working city employees, as well as greater appreciation to all of our many volunteers, whose service enable a stronger, more resilient city in the arts, education, recreation, planning, our environment and social services.

Finally, he embraced the dreams and visions of others and, while conversing with and truly listening to others, gave people reasons to keep pursuing a better community, a better world. Through his efforts, Ric inspired all of us to live up to Greenbelt’s community pledge and, as Ken Burns might put it, ensure that Greenbelt would continue to be a community that changes America for the better.

Konrad Herling

party and in various subgroups within the party. He became known for his upright character, his caring ways, his energy and drive.

Not too many people knew about Ric’s health challenges. He did so much without concern for himself. Carla, his wife, and many of us tried to warn him to be more restrained. He encouraged people to speak up and not be afraid to voice their concerns and needs. Ric conducted voter registration and education programs to encourage residents to vote, especially in local elections.

Greenbelt became a united community because of his participation on the city council and because of his tireless neighborhood engagement. He was so excited to be re-elected to council and so honored to have gained 300 more votes than in his first election, and to sit to the left of the mayor. He was beaming when he shared that information with me. He was a true force of nature, his commitment and dedication to the city of Greenbelt will be greatly missed, cherished and remembered. Ric, now you can do the “Angel’s work.” Rest in Peace and Power!

Lois Rosado

### Poem for Ric Gordon

In the council chambers / sits an empty chair / a mother and her children / are weeping in despair.

The crowd braved the rain / to pay their respects / to celebrate a life / that left many good effects.

A smile and kindly words / were your standard in trade / the city was enhanced / by the efforts that you made.

You likely never knew / how many lives you touched / by being the man you were / and by caring so much.

We all must double-down / be kind, think of others / to make up for the loss / of a heart so filled with love.

I was one of many / enriched from having met / the councilman named Ric / I vow to not forget.

Rick Ransom

### Remembering Ric!

As I watched tons of people file into the funeral home to pay homage to Councilmember Ric Gordon, I felt uplifted because in his short life he had achieved his goals and purpose: to enter politics, to provide community services, to be an advocate for and help to unite our city.

Losing his first election to become a member of the city council was a great disappointment, but not a defeat. Ric decided to double his community engagement efforts by attending council meetings and listening to residents. He organized food, clothing and school drives for residents in need all over Greenbelt. He was active in the Democratic



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#### A Prayer For Our Community

Heavenly Father, Thank You for our dear friend, Ric Gordon. We are grateful for his love of Greenbelt, his unrelenting service to our community and more importantly, for his uncommon love of ALL people. We pray that we can be inspired and motivated by Ric’s love and devotion to serving others. Thank You Lord, for Your love, peace and nearness that comforts Carla, his family and each of us during this difficult time. Help us to unite and be reminded of the fragility of life. We commit Ric’s soul to Your loving and merciful care. Thank You for the hope of eternity given through Your Son. “The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit” (Psalm 34:18). God Bless Us All.

Pastor Jeff Warner and your friends from MCF Community Church



A pair of children in Christmas pajamas watch the band play on the stage as they wait for Santa Claus on December 1.

- Photos by Danielle Towers



Mayor Emmett Jordan stands beside Santa as he hands out candy.



Children wait for Santa in Roosevelt Center.